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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/817,010	03/24/2001	Mark B. Lyles	068986.0105	5741

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EXAMINER

JOYNES, ROBERT M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1615

DATE MAILED: 07/03/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/817,010

Applicant(s)

LYLES, MARK B.

Examiner

Robert M. Joynes

Art Unit

1615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 November 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Receipt is acknowledged of applicant's Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 20, 2001.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lyles et al. (US 5621035). Lyles teaches a composition comprising about 1% to about 50% by weight alumina, about 50% to about 98% by weight silica, and about 1% to about 5% by weight boron (Col. 3, lines 14-22). The composition further comprises silicon carbide (Col. 12, Claim 13). The density of the composition ranges from 4 lb./ft³ to 62 lb./ft³ (Col. 3, lines 30-63). The composition is also highly porous (Col. 3, lines 30-63). Carbon fibers are also added to the composition (Col. 4, lines 37-67).

Claims 1-5 and 7-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Lyles et al. (US 5951295). Lyles teaches a composition comprising about 1% to about 50% by weight alumina, about 50% to about 98% by weight silica, and about 1% to about 5% by weight boron (Col. 3, lines 19-27). The composition further comprises silicon carbide (Col. 15, Claim 16). The density of the composition ranges from 4 lb./ft³ to 62 lb./ft³ (Col. 3, line 44 – Col. 4, line 18). The composition is also highly porous (Col.

3, line 44 – Col. 4, line 18; See also claims 12, 22, and 25). Carbon fibers are also added to the composition (Col. 4, line 60 – Col. 5, line 21). Lyles further teaches that the composition comprises zirconium fibers in addition to the already mentioned fibers (Col. 9, lines 9-15; col. 10, lines 1-8).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lyles et al. (US 5621035). The teachings of Lyles are discussed above. Lyles does not teach the exact porosity of the composition or the silicon dioxide content on surface of the composition.

While the reference does not teach the complete concentration range or porosity, differences in concentration will not support the patentability of subject matter encompassed by the prior art unless there is evidence indicating such concentration or

temperature is critical. Where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. *In re Aller*, 220 F.2d 454, 105 USPQ 233, 235 (CCPA 1955).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to prepare a composition comprising silica, alumina and boron with a specific porosity and density. It is the position of the examiner that prior art has obtained this result i.e., a composition with a wide range of density and is highly porous comprising silica, alumina and boron, and that no criticality is seen in applicant's particular porosity ranges or silicon dioxide content. Any distinction is a matter of degree and not of kind.

Therefore, the invention as a whole would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Claims 1-5 and 7-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lyles et al. (US 5951295). The teachings of Lyles are discussed above. Lyles does not teach the exact porosity of the composition or the silicon dioxide content on surface of the composition.

While the reference does not teach the complete concentration range, differences in concentration will not support the patentability of subject matter encompassed by the prior art unless there is evidence indicating such concentration or temperature is critical. Where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. *In re Aller*, 220 F.2d 454, 105 USPQ 233, 235 (CCPA 1955).

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At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to prepare a composition comprising silica, alumina and boron with a specific porosity and density. It is the position of the examiner that prior art has obtained this result i.e., a composition with a wide range of density and is highly porous comprising silica, alumina and boron, and that no criticality is seen in applicant's particular porosity ranges or silicon dioxide content. Any distinction is a matter of degree and not of kind.

Therefore, the invention as a whole would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lyles et al. (US 5621035) or Lyles et al. (US 5951295) in view of Markkula et al. (US 6063395). The teachings of the Lyles references are discussed above. Neither Lyles reference teaches the incorporation of a drug.

Markkula teaches an implant drug delivery device comprising silica and a therapeutic active agent (Col. 10, Claims 1-12).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate an active agent in the porous composition.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this to delivery subcutaneously a drug at a substantially constant rate for a prolonged period of time.

Therefore, the invention as a whole would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

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Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert M. Joynes whose telephone number is (703) 308-8869. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thurman K. Page can be reached on (703) 308-2927. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-3592 for regular communications and (703) 305-3592 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1235.

Robert M. Joynes
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1615
June 28, 2002

THURMAN K. PAGE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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